

NON MAJOR ELECTIVE PAPER I

INDIAN POLITICS FOR CIVIL SERVICES EXAM

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UNIT 4

CASTE AND POLITICS

Historically it has been very hard to change the structure of caste politics in India. More recently however, there has been a flux in caste politics, mainly caused by economic liberalisation in India. Contemporary India has seen the influence of caste start to decline. This is partly due to the spread of education to all castes which has had a democratising effect on the political system. However, this "equalising" of the playing field has not been without controversy. The Mandal Commission and its quotas system has been a particularly sensitive issue. Ideologically, caste and democracy differ from each other and cannot co-exist because caste advocates fragmentation of society whereas democracy stands for the unification of society.

Caste is based on inequality by birth. Democracy is based on principles of equality.

Caste advocates social exclusion and democracy advocates social inclusion. Caste provides wealth, power and status to specific groups but democracy provides equal chance to all categories irrespective of bias. However, the peculiarity is that both caste system and democracy co-exist in Indian society.

In connection to democracy three things are happening to which caste system is also closely related:

COMMUNISM

Communism is a philosophical, social, political and economic ideology and movement whose ultimate goal is the establishment of a communist society, namely a socioeconomic order structured upon the ideas of common ownership of the means of production and the absence of social classes, money

and the state.

Communism includes a variety of schools of thought which broadly include Marxism and anarcho-communism as well as the political ideologies grouped around both, all of which share the analysis that the current order of society stems from capitalism, its economic system and mode of production, namely that in this system there are two major social

classes, conflict between these two classes is the root of all problems in society and this situation can only ultimately be resolved through a social revolution.

The two classes are the proletariat (the working class), who make up the majority of the population within society and must work to survive; and the bourgeoisie (the capitalist class), a small minority who derives profit from employing the working class through private ownership of the means of production. According to this analysis, revolution would put the working class in power and in turn establish social ownership of the means of production which is the primary element in the transformation of society towards communism.

Along with social democracy, communism became the dominant political tendency within the international socialist movement by the 1920s. The emergence of the Soviet Union as the world's first nominally communist state led to communism's widespread association with Marxism–Leninism and the Soviet economic model. Almost all communist governments in the 20th century espoused Marxism–Leninism or a variation of it. Some economists and intellectuals argue that in practice the model was a form of state capital or a non-planned administrative or command economy